California Regional Water Quality Control Board

Los Angeles Region

Recipient of the 2001 *Environmental Leadership Award* from Keep California Beautiful

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CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) REQUIREMENTS

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (hereinafter referred to as the Regional Board) is the Lead Agency for evaluating the environmental impacts of the proposed amendment to the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region* (Basin Plan). The proposed amendment incorporates a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for metals in the San Gabriel River watershed.

The Secretary of Resources has certified the basin planning process as exempt from certain requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including preparation of an initial study, negative declaration, and environmental impact report, because the process serves the same functions as preparing those documents would. (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15251(g)). As the proposed amendment to the Basin Plan is part of the basin planning process, the environmental information developed for and included with the amendment is considered adequate without the need to prepare an initial study, negative declaration, and/or environmental impact report.

The "certified regulatory program" of the Regional Board, however, must satisfy the substantive requirements of California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Section 3777(a) which requires a written report that includes a description of the proposed activity, an alternatives analysis, and an identification of mitigation measures to minimize any significant adverse impacts. Section 3777(a) also requires the Regional Board to complete an environmental checklist as part of its substitute environmental documents.

The Regional Board's substantive obligations when adopting performance standards such as TMDLs, are described in Public Resources Code section 21159. Section 21159, which allows expedited environmental review for mandated projects, provides that an agency shall perform, at the time of the adoption of a rule or regulation requiring the installation of pollution control equipment, or a performance standard or treatment requirement, an Environmental Analysis of the reasonably foreseeable methods of compliance. The statute further requires that the Environmental Analysis at a minimum, include, all of the following:

(1) An analysis of the reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts of the methods of compliance.

(2) An analysis of reasonably foreseeable mitigation measures to lessen the adverse environmental impacts.

(3) An analysis of reasonably foreseeable alternative means of compliance with the rule or regulation that would have less significant adverse impacts. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21159(a).)

Section 21159(c) requires that the Environmental Analysis take into account a reasonable range of:

(1) Environmental, economic, and technical factors,

(2) Population and geographic areas, and

(3) Specific sites.

A "reasonable range" does not require an examination of every site, but a reasonably representative sample of them. The statute specifically states that the section shall not require the agency to conduct a "project level analysis." (Pub. Res. Code § 21159(d).) Rather, a project level analysis must be performed

by the local agencies that are required to implement the requirements of the TMDL. (Pub. Res. Code § 21159.2.) Notably, the Regional Board is prohibited from specifying the manner of compliance with its regulations (Water Code § 13360), and accordingly, the actual environmental impacts will necessarily depend upon the compliance strategy selected by the local agencies and other permittees.

The attached checklist and the staff report for the TMDL for metals in the San Gabriel River watershed, with the responses to comments, and the resolution approving the amendment, fulfill the requirements of Section 3777, Subdivision (a), and the Regional Board's substantive CEQA obligations. In preparing these CEQA substitute documents, the Regional Board has considered the requirements of Public Resources Code section 21159 and California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15187, and intends these documents to serve as a tier 1 environmental review.

Any potential environmental impacts associated with the TMDL depend upon the specific compliance projects selected by the responsible jurisdictions, many of whom are public agencies with their own CEQA obligations. (See Pub. Res. Code § 21159.2.) If not properly mitigated at the project level, there could be adverse environmental impacts. The CEQA substitute documents identify broad mitigation approaches that should be considered at the project level. Consistent with CEQA, the substitute documents do not engage in speculation or conjecture and only consider the reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts of the methods of compliance, the reasonably foreseeable feasible mitigation measures, and the reasonably foreseeable alternative means of compliance, which would avoid, eliminate, or reduce the identified impacts. The Regional Board recognizes that there may be project-level impacts that the local public agencies may determine are not feasible to mitigate. To the extent the alternatives, mitigation measures, or both, are not deemed feasible by those agencies, the necessity of implementing the federally required TMDL and removing the metals impairment from the San Gabriel River and its tributaries (an action required to achieve the express, national policy of the Clean Water Act) outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects because of the legal requirement to establish a TMDL that ensures compliance with water quality standards, and the region-wide benefits of water quality standards attainment in the San Gabriel River Estuary and its tributaries.

I. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY

The Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (also know as a Basin Plan) designates beneficial uses of waterbodies, establishes water quality objectives for the protection of these beneficial uses, and outlines a plan of implementation for maintaining and enhancing water quality. The proposed amendment would incorporate into the Basin Plan a TMDL for metals in segments of the San Gabriel River and its tributaries.

The Regional Board has identified the San Gabriel River Estuary, San Jose Creek, San Gabriel River Reach 2, and Coyote Creek as impaired due to exceedances of California Toxics Rule (CTR) criteria for metals. The metals subject to the proposed TMDL are toxic pollutants, and the existing water quality objectives for these metals reflect national policy that the discharge of toxic pollutants in toxic amounts be prohibited. The beneficial uses impaired by metals in the San Gabriel River and its tributaries are those associated with aquatic life and water supply, including wildlife, freshwater, estuarine, wetland, and marine habitat; rare, threatened or endangered species; and municipal, industrial, and agricultural water supply.

The Regional Board's goal in incorporating the TMDL is to protect and restore the overall water quality in the San Gabriel River watershed by controlling the loading of metals. The adoption of a TMDL is not discretionary and is compelled by both section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act (33 USC 1313(d)) and by a federal consent decree.

The proposed TMDL sets numeric targets for impaired reaches based on CTR criteria. Separate numeric targets are developed for dry and wet weather. The Estuary is impaired for copper in dry weather, San Jose Creek is impaired for selenium in dry weather, San Gabriel River Reach 2 is impaired for lead in wet weather, and Coyote Creek is impaired for copper, lead, and zinc in wet weather. Saltwater targets are developed for the Estuary and freshwater targets are developed for all other reaches. Freshwater numeric targets for copper, lead, and zinc are adjusted for reach specific hardness. Dry-weather targets are based on chronic CTR criteria and wet-weather targets are based on acute CTR criteria. CTR default conversion factors are used to convert dissolved CTR criteria for copper, lead, and zinc into numeric targets expressed in terms of total recoverable metals to address the potential for fractionation in the receiving water. Allocations are developed for upstream reaches and tributaries that drain to impaired reaches.

The TMDL source analysis concludes that in the San Gabriel River and its tributaries, dry-weather runoff from storm drains and water reclamation plants (WRPs) can contribute metals loading in dry weather, but the dominant source of annual metals loading occurs in storm water runoff during wet weather. Two power plants that discharge once-through cooling water are the dominant source of flow and metals loading in the Estuary. Both permitted and non-permitted sources of potential metals loading in the watershed were identified and assigned allocations.

The waste load allocations for the non-storm water NPDES permits (including power plants and WRPs) would be translated into permit limits upon their issuance, renewal, or reopening. Based on a review of permits, monitoring reports, and reasonable potential analyses, the TMDL concludes that the WRPs and other minor and general NPDES permits will meet their waste load allocations (or already have CTR-based effluent limits) and that the TMDL would not require the installation of pollution control equipment. The power plants are not expected to immediately meet their waste load allocations, and the TMDL implementation plan includes a review of potential compliance measures for the power plants, such as relocating the discharge from the Estuary to an ocean outfall, replacing copper condensers, or other source control measures, and an economic analysis for the potential measures. It also, should be noted that the power plants are expected to be subject to CTR-based effluent limits when their NPDES permits are re-issued, regardless of whether the TMDL is adopted. Although the TMDL establishes waste load allocations that may be slightly more stringent than what would otherwise be required in the upcoming permit, the methods and costs of compliance are not expected to differ significantly.

The proposed TMDL would require the MS4 and Caltrans storm water permittees to achieve their waste load allocations in prescribed percentages of the watershed, achieving dry-weather allocations in the entire watershed within 10 years and wet-weather allocations in the entire watershed within 15 years. The Regional Board may extend the allowable implementation schedule if an integrated resources approach is employed and permittees demonstrate the need for an extended schedule. The implementation plan includes an evaluation of a combination of non-structural and structural best management practices (BMPs) that could be used to achieve compliance with the MS4 and Caltrans storm water waste load allocations, including an economic analysis for the suggested measures. Because most general industrial and construction storm water facilities discharge to the MS4 system, the BMPs and potential compliance

approaches evaluated apply to the general industrial and construction storm water permittees as well. Non-structural BMPs may include increased storm drain catch basin cleanings, improved street cleaning and educating industries of good housekeeping practices. Structural BMPs may include the installation of storm water treatment devices specifically designed to reduce metals loadings, such as infiltration trenches and sand or organic filters, at critical points in the storm water conveyance system. Such devices may also incorporate surge control, such as underground storage vaults or detention basins. A diversion and treatment strategy for dry and/or wet-weather runoff may also be implemented to meet the TMDL. However, the Regional Board supports in concept an integrated water resources approach to improving water quality that focuses on the beneficial re-use of storm water to preserve local groundwater resources and reduce the need for imported water where feasible.

II. GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMENTS

The detailed environmental setting and authority for the San Gabriel River metals TMDL is set forth in the detailed technical report entitled "Total Maximum Daily Loads for Metals San Gabriel River and Impaired Tributaries." The report identifies the environmental setting and need for the project. In addition, the report identifies the reasonably foreseeable methods of compliance.

The Regional Board has considered potential environmental impacts arising from the reasonably foreseeable means of compliance with the TMDL. (Pub. Res. Code, § 21159(a).) Many of these compliance approaches are already required under existing law. The continued exceedances of water quality standards are themselves adverse environmental impacts, as the aquatic life and water supply beneficial uses for these waterbodies will remain at risk during the implementation period for the TMDL. The TMDL authorizes the continued exceedance of water quality standards for up to 15 years; however, the Regional Board staff has determined that this amount of time is reasonable and as short as practicable to allow responsible agencies to implement a complex, yet efficient, mix of projects to comply with the waste load allocations. The adverse impacts of non-compliance with water quality standards are mitigated through a progressive reduction in the loading of metals to the San Gabriel River watershed, and through a schedule that is reasonable and as short as practicable.

Based on information developed during the CEQA scoping process, the accompanying CEQA checklist identifies the reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts of the methods of compliance. (Pub. Res. Code, §21159(a)(1).) This analysis is a program-level (i.e., macroscopic) analysis. CEQA does not require the Regional Board to conduct a project-level analysis of environmental impacts. (Pub. Res. Code, § 21159(d).) Similarly, the CEQA substitute documents do not engage in speculation or conjecture. (Pub. Res. Code, §21159(a).) When the programmatic CEQA scoping identifies a potential environmental impact, the accompanying analysis identifies reasonably foreseeable feasible mitigation measures. (Pub. Res. Code, § 21151(a)(2).) Because responsible agencies will most likely use a combination of structural and non-structural BMPs, the CEQA substitute documents have identified the reasonably foreseeable alternative means of compliance. (Pub. Res. Code, § 21159(a)(3).)

The responsible jurisdictions are likely to use a dynamic combination of structural and non-structural strategies that will vary from project to project. These project-level determinations could have environmental impacts if not properly mitigated at the project level. Project proponents will need to consider mitigation such as alternative siting, varying construction times for any projects requiring construction activities, and designing diversions to allow for minimum base flows to support downstream

habitat. With respect to potential environmental impacts that may occur at the project level, the accompanying checklist identifies the types of mitigation that may be feasible. In the event that a specific strategy may have impacts that cannot feasibly be mitigated, the project proponent may need to consider an alternative strategy or combination of strategies to comply with the TMDL. Furthermore, to the extent the alternatives, mitigation measures, or both, are not deemed feasible by those agencies, the necessity of implementing the federally required TMDL and reducing the levels of metals in the San Gabriel River and its tributaries (an action required to achieve the express, national policy of the Clean Water Act) outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, as they will be minimal, because project level planning, construction, and operation methods are available to mitigate foreseeable environmental impacts from implementing the TMDL as described in the CEQA checklist.

		Environmental Impacts YES	MAYBE	NO
III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST				
1.	**Earth. Will the proposal result in:**			
	a. Unstable earth conditions or in changes in geologic substructures?			No
	b. Disruptions, displacements, compaction or overcoming of the soil?		Maybe	
	c. Change in topography or ground surface relief features?			No
	d. The destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?			No
	e. Any increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site?		Maybe	
	f. Changes in deposition or erosion of beach sands, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed of the ocean or any bay, inlet or lake?		Maybe	
	g. Exposure of people or property to geologic hazards, such as earthquakes, landslides, mudslides, ground failure, or similar hazards?			No
2.	**Air. Will the proposal result in:**			
	a. Substantial air emissions or deterioration of ambient air quality?		Maybe	
	b. The creation of objectionable odors?		Maybe	
	c. Alteration of air movement, moisture or temperature, or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?			No
3.	**Water. Will the proposal result in:**			
	a. Changes in currents, or the course of direction or water movements, in either marine or fresh waters?		Maybe	
	b. Changes in absorption rates, drainage patterns, or the rate and amount of surface water runoff?	Yes		
	c. Alterations to the course of flow of flood waters?		Maybe	
	d. Change in the amount of surface water in any water body?		Maybe	
	e. Discharge into surface waters, or in any alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, or turbidity?	Yes		
	f. Alteration of the direction or rate of flow of ground waters?		Maybe	

Environmental Impacts
YES MAYBE NO

III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST		
	g. Change in the quantity or quality of ground waters, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations?	Maybe
	h. Substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supplies?	Maybe~~No~~
	i. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding or tidal waves?	Maybe
4.	**Plant Life. Will the proposal result in:**	
	a. Change in the diversity of species, or number of any species of plants (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, microflora and aquatic plants)?	Maybe
	b. Reduction of the numbers of any unique, rare or endangered species of plants?	Maybe
	c. Introduction of new species of plants into an area, or in a barrier to the normal replenishment of existing species?	Maybe
	d. Reduction in acreage of any agricultural crop?	No
5.	**Animal Life. Will the proposal result in:**	
	a. Change in the diversity of species, or numbers of any species of animals (birds, land animals including reptiles, fish and shellfish, benthic organisms, insects or microfauna)?	Maybe
	b. Reduction of the numbers of any unique, rare or endangered species of animals?	Maybe
	c. Introduction of new species of animals into an area, or result in a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?	Maybe
	d. Deterioration to existing fish or wildlife habitat?	Maybe
6.	**Noise. Will the proposal result in:**	
	a. Increases in existing noise levels?	Maybe
	b. Exposure of people to severe noise levels?	No
7.	**Light and Glare. Will the proposal:**	
	a. Produce new light or glare?	Maybe

Environmental Impacts
YES MAYBE NO

III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST		
8.	**Land Use. Will the proposal result in:** a. Substantial alteration of the present or planned land use of an area?	Maybe
9.	**Natural Resources. Will the proposal result in:** a. Increase in the rate of use of any natural resources? b. Substantial depletion of any nonrenewable natural resource?	Maybe~~No~~ No
10.	**Risk of Upset. Will the proposal involve:** a. A risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to: oil, pesticides, chemicals or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions?	Maybe
11.	**Population. Will the proposal:** a. Alter the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?	No
12.	**Housing. Will the proposal:** a. Affect existing housing, or create a demand for additional housing?	No
13.	**Transportation/Circulation. Will the proposal result in:** a. Generation of substantial additional vehicular movement? b. Effects on existing parking facilities, or demand for new parking? c. Substantial impact upon existing transportation systems? d. Alterations to present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods? e. Alterations to waterborne, rail or air traffic? f. Increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists or pedestrians?	Maybe Maybe Maybe Maybe Maybe Maybe
14.	**Public Service. Will the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas:** a. Fire protection? b. Police protection? c. Schools? d. Parks or other recreational facilities?	 No No Maybe Maybe

		Environmental Impacts YES MAYBE NO
III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST		
	e. Maintenance of public facilities, including roads?	Yes
	f. Other governmental services?	Yes
15.	**Energy. Will the proposal result in:**	
	a. Use of substantial amounts of fuel or energy?	Maybe~~No~~
	b. Substantial increase in demand upon existing sources of energy, or require the development of new sources of energy?	No
16.	**Utilities and Service Systems. Will the proposal result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to the following utilities:**	
	a. Power or natural gas?	No
	b. Communications systems?	No
	c. Water?	Maybe
	d. Sewer or septic tanks?	No
	e. Storm water drainage?	Yes
	f. Solid waste and disposal?	Maybe
17.	**Human Health. Will the proposal result in:**	
	a. Creation of any health hazard or potential health hazard (excluding mental health)?	Maybe
	b. Exposure of people to potential health hazards?	No
18.	**Aesthetics. Will the proposal result in:**	
	a. The obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public?	Maybe~~No~~
	b. The creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?	Maybe~~No~~
19.	**Recreation. Will the proposal result in:**	
	a. Impact upon the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities?	Yes
20.	**Archeological/Historical. Will the proposal:**	
	a. Result in the alteration of a significant archeological or historical site structure, object or building?	Maybe
21.	**Mandatory Findings of Significance**	
	Potential to degrade: Does the project have the potential to degrade the	No

III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST		Environmental Impacts YES MAYBE NO
	quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	
	Short-term: Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals? (A short-term impact on the environment is one which occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time, while long-term impacts will endure well into the future.)	No
	Cumulative: Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project may impact on two or more separate resources where the impact on each resource is relatively small, but where the effect of the total of those impacts on the environment is significant.)	No
	Substantial adverse: Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	No

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

The analysis of potential environmental impacts is based on implementation of source control measures, flow control measures, storm water best management practices, and diversion and treatment strategies to reduce metals loading to The San Gabriel River and its tributaries in response to the proposed Basin Plan amendment. Potential impacts to air quality, geology and soils, biological resources, hydrology, land use planning, public services, and utilities are discussed below, and it is found that any significant impacts can be mitigated at a project level (Pub. Res. Code, §15091 (a)(2)). The evaluation considers whether the environmental impact indicated will have a substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the activity. In addition, the evaluation discusses environmental effects in proportion to their severity and probability of occurrence.

1. Earth. a. Will the proposal result in unstable earth conditions or in changes in geologic substructures?

Answer: No

No impact is expected because foreseeable methods of compliance, including implementation of any structural BMPs or storage, diversion or treatment facilities, or relocating discharge locations, would not be of the size or scale to result in unstable earth conditions or in changes in geologic substructures. Potential implementation strategies, including underground storage vaults and detention basins and construction of treatment facilities and pipelines, would require relatively shallow earthwork. For example, infiltration trenches and sand filters are typically less than 10 feet deep and, as shown in the staff report, would have a footprint of approximately 6500 to 17,500 square feet. Although the San Gabriel watershed is underlain by many faults, these types of facilities are not of the size or scale to cause or accelerate the potential for unstable earth conditions or in changes in geologic substructures. To the extent that such facilities could result in unstable earth conditions or in changes in geologic substructures, potential impacts could be avoided or mitigated through proper siting, design, and groundwater level monitoring to ensure stable conditions.

1. Earth. b. Will the proposal result in disruptions, displacements, compaction or overcoming of the soil?

Answer: Maybe

Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, the proposal may result in soil excavation during construction of structural BMPs or storage, diversion or treatment facilities for storm water. Disruption of the soil may also occur during construction activities associated with relocating the power plant outfalls to the ocean, if this strategy is chosen for compliance. Standard construction techniques, including but not limited to, shoring, piling and soil stabilization can mitigate these potential short-term impacts. Other strategies include the use of infiltration devices or other structural BMPs to treat a portion of storm water, which could result in disruptions of the soil, increased risk of liquefaction, or slope instability by increasing the rate at which water is discharged to the ground. This potential adverse impact would be temporary and could be mitigated to less than significant levels if structural BMPs are properly designed and sited in areas where the risk of soil disruption is minimal. Geotechnical studies would be conducted prior to construction of infiltration facilities to define site-specific subsurface conditions. If the project were determined to have

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

the potential to cause an increased risk of liquefaction, monitoring and contingency measures would be required to reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level. Such measures could include the installation of new monitoring wells to detect any substantial increase in groundwater levels and the re-routing of storm water to other facilities as applicable if a substantial increase was detected. Geotechnical studies would also include recommendations for slope stabilizing measures such as optimum slope design for stability and safety, soil compaction or recompaction requirements, and surface cover.

1. Earth. c. Will the proposal result in change in topography or ground surface relief features?

Answer: No

No impact is expected because foreseeable methods of compliance, including implementation of any structural BMPs or storage, diversion or treatment facilities, or relocating discharge locations, would not be of the size or scale to result in change in topography or ground surface relief features. Potential implementation strategies, including underground storage vaults and detention basins and construction of treatment facilities and pipelines, would require relatively shallow earthwork. For example, infiltration trenches and sand filters are typically less than 10 feet deep and, as shown in the staff report, would have a footprint of approximately 6500 to 17,500 square feet. Although the San Gabriel watershed has varied topography and surface relief features, these types of facilities are not of the size or scale alter topography or ground surface relief features. To the extent that such facilities could result in change in topography or ground surface relief features, potential impacts could be avoided or mitigated through siting such alterations in geologically stable areas outside of flood plains.

1. Earth d. Will the proposal result in the destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?

Answer: No

No impact is expected because foreseeable methods of compliance, including implementation of any structural BMPs or storage, diversion or treatment facilities, or relocating discharge locations, would not be of the size or scale to result in the destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features. Potential implementation strategies, including underground storage vaults and detention basins and construction of treatment facilities and pipelines, would require relatively shallow earthwork. For example, infiltration trenches and sand filters are typically less than 10 feet deep and, as shown in the staff report, would have a footprint of approximately 6,500 to 17,500 square feet. Although the San Gabriel watershed may have unique geologic or physical features, these types of facilities are not of the size or scale to alter geologic or physical features. To the extent that such facilities could result in the destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features, potential impacts could be mitigated by mapping these features to avoid siting facilities in these areas.

1. Earth. e. Will the proposal result in any increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site?

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

Answer: Maybe

Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, the proposal may result in the use of infiltration devices or other structural management practices to treat runoff, which could result in erosion of the soil by increasing the rate at which water is discharged to the ground. This potential adverse impact would be temporary and could be mitigated to less than significant levels if structural management practices are properly designed and sited in areas where risks to soil erosion are minimal. Construction of treatment facilities could result in erosion of soils onsite. Erosion of the soils may also occur during construction activities associated with relocating the power plant outfalls to the ocean, if this strategy is chosen for compliance. Responsible agencies may plant cover crops or buffer strips to increase soil infiltration and reduce runoff, in order to reduce soil erosion. Furthermore, construction sites are required to retain sediments on site, either by a general construction storm water permit or through the construction program of the applicable MS4 permit - both of which are already designed to minimize or eliminate erosion impacts on receiving water.

1. Earth. f. Will the proposal result in changes in deposition or erosion of beach sands, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed of the ocean or any bay, inlet or lake?

Answer: Maybe

To the extent that storm flows are maintained on site or diverted to storage or infiltration facilities, siltation or deposition of sand within soft-bottomed portions of the river may be impacted. Minimal deposition currently occurs within the concrete lined channels and no impact is anticipated in the channels. Reduction in siltation in the soft-bottomed portions of the river may be considered a positive impact as fine sediments may contain toxic pollutants. However, sediment release is important for beach replenishment and the wholesale removal of sediment is not required by the TMDL. Responsible agencies may reduce potential impacts to insignificant levels by identifying hot spots of polluted sediment and using targeted BMPs to remove sediments from these hot spots. Impacts to deposition of beach sand may be mitigated by further study at the project level and by on-going monitoring.

1. Earth. g. Will the proposal result in exposure of people or property to geologic hazards, such as earthquakes, landslides, mudslides, ground failure, or similar hazards?

Answer: No:

No impact is expected. Although areas of the watershed are subject to geologic hazards, geotechnical studies prepared at the project level would ensure that treatment facilities or structural BMPs were not employed in these areas and that potential impacts were less than significant.

2. Air. a. Will the proposal result in substantial air emissions or deterioration of ambient air quality?

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

Answer: Maybe

Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, construction and operation of runoff treatment facilities or structural BMPs, ~~or~~ construction activities associated with relocating discharge outfalls, or use of alternative cooling strategies for power plants discharging to the Estuary, could result in increased air emissions. Potential sources of increased air emissions include temporary increased traffic during construction and long-term increased traffic caused by ongoing maintenance of facilities (e.g., delivery of materials, deployment of vactor trucks and vector control vehicles). Increased street sweeper traffic could cause additional air emissions from truck engines (although not from re-suspension of sediments, which is not an issue with vacuum-assisted street sweepers). Impacts due to increased traffic could be mitigated by the use of construction, maintenance, and street sweeper vehicles with lower-emission engines, use of soot reduction traps or diesel particulate filters, use of emulsified diesel fuel, and design of treatment devices to minimize the frequency of maintenance trips. Construction activities could also potentially cause re-suspension of sediments and lead to air quality impacts. Mitigation measures such as vapor barriers and moisture control are available to reduce transfer of small sediments to air. Air emissions from the construction and operation of treatment systems can be mitigated through deployment of off-gas treatment systems, application of vapor suppressing foams and aeration of stagnant waters. Alternative cooling strategies such as closed cycle cooling, and wet or dry cooling towers, can require increased fuel consumption, thereby producing increased air emissions. These emissions would likely be insignificant compared to emissions produced by the power plants' gas fired generators. To the extent that there are significant increased emissions, standard emissions reduction technologies are available to mitigate potential impacts. Dry cooling may result in reduced plant efficiency, especially in warmer climates, which could lead to an increase in air emissions either by increasing generation on-site or purchasing energy from the grid. The effects on plant efficiency and associated air emissions would likely be infrequent as the average summertime temperatures in Long Beach are 60–80°F. Improved efficiency can be achieved by using a wet-dry condensing system. Wet cooling towers can contribute to particulate matter emissions. This potential impact could also be mitigated by the use of a hybrid wet-dry cooling systems. Because wet cooling would only be used when air temperatures were too high to operate a dry system efficiently, any potential air quality impacts would be intermediate.

Applicable and appropriate mitigation measures will be evaluated when specific projects are determined. Any potential air emissions resulting from construction or operational activities would be subject to regulation by the applicable air pollution control agency. These impacts could be deemed significant, especially in areas where the region is designated non-attainment for relevant air pollutants. However, any significant, un-mitigable impacts on air resources would be short-term in duration and/or are outweighed by the necessity of the project. Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act, and a federal judicial consent decree legally mandate the TMDL to reduce toxic levels of metals in the San Gabriel River and its tributaries (an action required to achieve the express, national policy of the Clean Water Act). Furthermore, restoring attainment of water quality standards in the San Gabriel River will protect water supply beneficial uses, which is of region wide economic significance. Integrated approaches used to implement this TMDL, through reclamation and groundwater recharge, will provide improved water quality and increase local water supplies for future generations.

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

2. Air. b. Will the proposal result in creation of objectionable odors?

Answer: Maybe

Structural BMPs or treatment facilities may be a source of objectionable odors if design allows for water stagnation or collection of water with sulfur-containing compounds. If chosen as a compliance strategy, the elimination of once through cooling water intake and discharge to the San Gabriel River could potentially cause water to become stagnant and create objectionable odors in the Alamitos Bay area. Mitigation measures may include recirculation, covers, aeration, filters, and odor suppressing chemical additives.

2. Air. c. Will the proposal result in alteration of air movement, moisture or temperature, or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?

Answer: No

This proposal sets wasteload and load allocations to protect the aquatic life and water supply beneficial uses of the San Gabriel River and its tributaries. Foreseeable methods of compliance include a combination of structural and nonstructural BMPs, treatment facilities, source control measures, ~~and~~ relocating discharge outfalls, and alternative cooling technologies for power plants that discharge to the Estuary. It is not foreseeable that this proposal will result in alteration of air movement, moisture or temperature, or any change in climate, either locally or regionally. If chosen as a compliance option, wet cooling towers can produce vapor plumes, which could potentially create problems for fogging and elevated moisture levels. However, well-designed plume abatement technologies are available, such as hybrid wet-dry cooling towers, and have been used in a variety of climates over many decades to mitigate these impacts.

3. Water. a. Will the proposal result in changes in currents, or the course of direction or water movements, in either marine or fresh waters?

Answer: Maybe

A change in fresh water movement may occur if compliance with the TMDL is achieved in part through diversion of storm water from open channels to wastewater or urban runoff treatment facilities. This is likely to have a positive effect during wet weather, as it will reduce the potential for flooding during storm events. Reductions in dry-weather flow could have potential negative impacts on minimum flows required to support aquatic life. Potential impacts to dry-weather flow should be considered at the project level. Mitigation measures to maintain minimal flow to support habitat related beneficial uses should be reviewed and approved by the California Department of Fish and Game and National Marine Fisheries Service. If relocation of the power plant discharge outfalls were chosen as a compliance strategy, it would significantly decrease flow in the Estuary and result in changes in currents and the course of direction or water movements. This could be considered a positive impact, as it would return the Estuary to more natural flow conditions.

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

3. Water. b. Will the proposal result in changes in absorption rates, drainage patterns, or the rate and amount of surface water runoff?

Answer: Yes

Changes in drainage patterns and the rate and amount of surface water runoff will occur if a portion of storm water is diverted and/or captured and treated or structural BMPs are implemented to achieve compliance with the TMDL. Reductions in surface water runoff resulting from the use of infiltration devices and other structural BMPs would be considered a positive environmental impact, as there would conceivably be a corresponding reduction in pollutant loading associated with urban and storm water run-off. Such devices address the effects of development and increased impervious surfaces in the watershed. Potential impacts to dry-weather flow should be considered at the project level. Mitigation measures to maintain minimal flow to support habitat related beneficial uses should be reviewed and approved by the California Department of Fish and Game and National Marine Fisheries Service.

3. Water. c. Will the proposal result in alterations to the course of flow of flood waters?

Answer: Maybe

Changes in surface water runoff during wet-weather resulting from the use of infiltration devices and other structural BMPs would be considered a positive environmental impact. Such devices address the effects of development and increased impervious surface in the watersheds. Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, the proposal may result in the diversion and storage of a portion of storm water, altering its current course of flow in the creek. However, if properly sited and designed, treatment strategies will not reduce the flood control functions in the region and therefore these impacts would be less than significant. Moreover, they will likely reduce peak floodwater flows, would be a public benefit, as some of these peak flows constitute a potential flooding hazard and/or a safety hazard to anyone in their near-vicinity.

3. Water. d. Will the proposal result in change in the amount of surface water in any water body?

Answer: Maybe

A change in the amount of surface water in waterbodies may occur if compliance with the TMDL is achieved by infiltration of storm water runoff or by diverting a portion of runoff to wastewater or urban runoff treatment facilities. Changes in surface water quantity during wet-weather resulting from the use of infiltration devices and other structural BMPs would be considered a positive environmental impact as such devices address the negative environmental effects of development and increased impervious surfaces in the watershed. Potential impacts to dry-weather flow should be considered at the project level. Mitigation measures to maintain minimal flow to support habitat related beneficial uses should be reviewed and approved by the California Department of Fish and Game and National Marine Fisheries Service. If

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

relocation of the power plant discharge outfalls were chosen as a compliance strategy, it would significantly decrease flow in the Estuary. This could be considered a positive impact, as it would return the Estuary to more natural flow conditions.

3. Water. e. Will the proposal result in discharge to surface waters, or in any alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, or turbidity?

Answer: Yes

A change in the quality of surface water will occur when the TMDL is implemented by controlling sources of metals in surface runoff and/or treating dry weather runoff and storm water runoff. This will positively impact water quality and associated aquatic life, and water supply beneficial uses of surface waters. If relocation of the power plant discharge outfalls were chosen as a compliance strategy, it could potentially impact the quality of marine waters, although it would significantly reduce thermal and other water quality impacts on the Estuary. Ocean outfalls will be subject to NPDES permitting requirements to mitigate impacts to water quality in accordance with the California Ocean Plan or other applicable regulations. Dischargers may complete an ocean impact analysis using a dilution model acceptable to the Regional Board to determine effluent limitations.

3. Water. f. Will the proposal result in alteration of the direction or rate of flow of ground waters?

Answer: Maybe

A change in the rate of flow of ground waters may occur if compliance with the TMDL is achieved through significant infiltration of storm water. When properly managed, increased groundwater recharge would be considered a positive impact by the proposal, as it would contribute to replenishing local water supplies and reducing reliance on imported water. Standard treatment technologies are available to reduce contaminant levels prior to recharge. Applicable and appropriate mitigation measures will be evaluated when specific projects are determined.

3. Water. g. Change in the quantity or quality of ground waters, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations?

Answer: Maybe

A change in the quantity of ground waters may occur if compliance with the TMDL is achieved through significant infiltration of storm water. Increased groundwater recharge would be considered a positive impact by the proposal, as it would contribute to replenishing our local water supplies. If infiltration devices are not properly sited and constructed, ground water quality could be adversely impacted. The potential for adverse impacts may be mitigated through proper design and siting of infiltration devices, pretreatment prior to infiltration, and groundwater monitoring. Proper design and siting would include

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

following manufacturer guidelines for infiltration systems, providing adequate groundwater separation with soils suitable for infiltration, and complying with any applicable groundwater permitting requirements.

3. Water. h. Will the proposal result in substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supplies?

Answer: ~~No.~~Maybe

Implementation of the TMDL would result in an increase in the amount of water available for public water supplies if compliance with the TMDL is achieved through significant infiltration of storm water. A major goal of the integrated water resources approach is to capture and re-use storm water runoff for public water supplies. If alternative cooling technologies for power plants that discharge to the Estuary, including wet-cooling towers, were chosen as a compliance strategy, there could be an increased demand for public water supply. However, steam electric generating facilities using once-through salt water can reduce water usage by 70 to 96% by converting to closed-cycle, recirculating cooling systems. If the power plants were unable to fully supply wet cooling towers with existing reclaimed water supplies, they could look to alternative sources, such as the reuse of captured storm water. Power plants may work with other responsible agencies under the TMDL to pursue an integrated water resources approach. To the extent that potable water would be used in wet cooling towers, the amount of required water could be mitigated through the installation of flow reduction technologies such as recirculating cooling lakes, cooling canals, or hybrid wet-dry cooling towers.

3. Water. i. Will the proposal result in exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding or tidal waves?

Answer: Maybe

Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, the proposal may result in flooding hazards if structural BMPs are not properly designed and constructed to allow for bypass of storm water during storms that exceed design capacity. This potential impact can be mitigated through proper design. Potential risks of flooding due to clogging of structural treatment devices with debris can be avoided by regular maintenance and inspection prior to storms. The proposal also may reduce flooding hazards by reducing the peak storm flows in the San Gabriel River and its tributaries by diverting and retaining water on-site via infiltration. To the extent that BMPs or regional treatment plants construction may impact the current delineation of the 100-year floodplain (or other applicable floodplain delineation), project proponents may conduct hydraulic modeling to analyze those impacts including increased water depth and velocity. Based on such analysis, the specific project may be modified or applicable and appropriate mitigation measures considered.

4. Plant Life. a. Will the proposal result in change in the diversity of species, or number of any species of plants (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, microflora and aquatic plants)?

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

Answer: Maybe

If structural BMPs or treatment facilities are used, impact to plant life in terms of diversity of species or number of species would most likely occur if BMPs are located in open space or undeveloped areas. Urban land uses tend to be landscaped and often with common, non-native species. Based on the waste load allocations for storm water permittees, it is most likely that structural BMPs and treatment facilities would be sited in urbanized areas. If facilities were sited on undeveloped areas, alternative site locations, or design modifications that would avoid impacts to plant life would be implemented. If avoidance could not be implemented, consultation with agencies having jurisdiction over identified resources would occur to identify specific mitigation measures such as restoration efforts designed to remove exotic plants and re-vegetate with native plant species. Other implementation strategies include diversion and treatment, which could result in reduced flows, particularly during dry weather, and may adversely impact downstream plant life. Potential impacts to dry-weather flow should be considered at the project level. Mitigation measures to maintain minimal flow to support downstream plant life-related beneficial uses should be reviewed and approved by the California Department of Fish and Game and National Marine Fisheries Service. If relocation of the power plant discharge outfalls to the ocean were chosen as a compliance strategy, it could potentially impact aquatic plant life through disturbances in marine sediments and increased turbidity as a result of poor design or siting of outfalls. Ocean outfalls will be subject to NPDES permitting requirements to mitigate potential impacts in accordance with the California Ocean Plan or other applicable regulations. Botanical surveys may be conducted and outfall structures designed and sited to minimize disturbances and to diffuse discharge.

4. Plant life. b. Will the proposal result in reduction of the numbers of any unique, rare or endangered species of plants?

Answer: Maybe

Most BMPs are expected to have a relatively small footprint and would not be likely to have a significant impact on critical habitat for endangered species. Larger regional retention and treatment facilities pose a greater potential threat to critical habitat. Potential impacts to unique, rare or endangered species and/or critical habitat should be evaluated at the project level. If facilities were sited on undeveloped areas, alternative site locations, or design modifications that would avoid impacts to plant life could be implemented. If avoidance could not be implemented, consultation with resource agencies including the California Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife, having jurisdiction over identified resources would occur to identify specific mitigation measures such as restoration efforts designed to re-vegetate unique, rare or endangered species of plants. The TMDL recognizes that compliance with allocations could include diversion and treatment strategies, which could reduce dry-weather flows and may impact downstream plant life. Potential impacts to dry-weather flow should be considered at the project level. Mitigation measures to maintain minimal flow to support downstream plant life-related beneficial uses should be reviewed and approved by the California Department of Fish and Game and National Marine Fisheries Service. If relocation of the power plant discharge outfalls to the ocean were chosen as a compliance strategy, it could potentially impact aquatic plant life through increases in turbidity. Ocean outfalls will be subject to NPDES permitting requirements to mitigate potential impacts in accordance with the California Ocean Plan or other applicable regulations. Botanical surveys may be conducted and outfall structures designed and sited to minimize disturbances and to diffuse discharge.

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

4. Plant life. c. Will the proposal result in introduction of new species of plants into an area, or in a barrier to the normal replenishment of existing species?

Answer: Maybe

Structural BMPs used to treat storm water runoff may include vegetated buffer strips or grassy swales, which could result in the introduction of new species of plants into an area. Based on the waste load allocations for storm water permittees, it is most likely that structural BMPs would be sited in urbanized areas. Urban land uses tend to be landscaped and often with common, non-native species. However, to the extent possible, vegetated buffer strips and swales should be planted with native species. Also see response to "4. Plant life. a." and "4. Plant life. b."

4. Plant life. d. Will the proposal result in reduction in acreage of any agricultural crop?

Answer: No

Implementation of the proposed Basin Plan is not likely to result in the reduction in acreage of any agricultural crop, as agriculture is not a significant land use in the portions of the San Gabriel watershed subject to the TMDL or assigned allocations. To the extent that implementation strategies are employed in agricultural areas, many of these strategies may actually improve agricultural resources by reducing the loss of topsoil or improving soil quality. The available management practices or other potential strategies are unlikely to lead to a conversion of agricultural land to other uses.

5. Animal Life. a. Will the proposal result in change in the diversity of species, or numbers of any species of animals (birds, land animals including reptiles, fish and shellfish, benthic organisms, insects or microfauna?

Answer: Maybe

Some of the diversion and treatment strategies considered could result in reduced flows, particularly during dry weather, which may have an adverse impact on downstream aquatic life habitat. The agencies responsible for implementing the TMDL should consult with agencies such as the California Department of Fish and Game to develop strategies to prevent such impacts to these resources and the National Marine Fisheries Service to determine minimum base flows to be maintained to protect these resources. In the event that maintaining these flows will not achieve compliance with TMDL requirements, an alternative treatment and return strategy should be developed. If relocation of the power plant discharge outfalls to the ocean were chosen as a compliance strategy, it could potentially impact marine animal life through discharge of pollutants or disturbances to marine sediments and increases in turbidity. Ocean outfalls will be subject to permitting requirements to ensure compliance with water quality standards in accordance with the California Ocean Plan or other applicable regulations. The outfalls would be designed and operated to maintain marine life and a healthy and diverse marine community. Removing

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

power plant discharges from the Estuary would at the same time decrease water quality and animal life impacts to the Estuary.

5. Animal Life. b. Will the proposal result in reduction of the numbers of any unique, rare or endangered species of animals?

Answer: Maybe

See response to "5. Animal Life. a".

5. Animal Life. c. Will the proposal result in introduction of new species of animals into an area, or result in a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?

Answer: Maybe

It is not foreseeable that implementation scenarios to achieve allocations will result in introduction of new species of animals into an area. Some structural BMPs or online treatment facilities could represent fish barriers in the river. Existing dams in the river, including rubber dams, could impact movement of fish and terrestrial animals. The TMDL will not likely result in additional barriers or changes to existing condition. Storm water allocations will likely be achieved through a combination of nonstructural BMPs, source control measures, and structural BMPs, which can be placed offline. To the extent that additional barriers are implemented in the watershed, any potential negative impacts would be mitigated through consultation with the California Department of Fish and Game to determine minimum flows required to allow for the passage of fish. Also see response to "5. Animal Life. a".

5. Animal Life. d. Will the proposal result in deterioration to existing fish or wildlife habitat?

Answer: Maybe

See response to "5. Animal Life. a".

6. Noise. a. Will the proposal result in increases in existing noise levels?

Answer: Maybe

Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, the proposal may result in increases in existing noise levels, particularly in the case of construction of structural BMPs or treatment facilities for storm water or construction activities associated with relocating discharge outfalls. The potential for increased noise levels due to construction is limited and short-term. These short-term noise impacts can also be mitigated by implementing noise abatement procedures, standard construction techniques such as sound barriers, mufflers and restricted hours of construction. Implementation may also result in increased noise levels during operation and maintenance of structural BMPs or treatment facilities, including pumps used for diversion of water and vacuum trucks and pumps for removing liquids. The use of alternative cooling

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

technologies could result in increased noise levels if this were chosen as a compliance strategy for the power plants. The specific project impacts can be mitigated by standard noise abatement techniques including siting facilities away from receptors, installing sound barriers and insulation to reduce noise from pumps, motors, fans, etc., designing passive BMPs that do not require frequent maintenance, scheduling of maintenance during mid-day hours, and noise monitoring to ensure levels remain below acceptable levels. Increased street sweeping could cause increased noise levels, which can be mitigated by scheduling sweeping during mid-day hours. Applicable and appropriate mitigation measures will be evaluated when specific projects are determined. Noise from cooling towers can be generated by falling water inside the towers and/or fan or motor noise. However, power plant sites generally do not result in off-site levels more than 10 decibels above background. Potential noise impacts would primarily be in terms of adverse public reactions rather than environmental or human health concerns. This is due to the broadband character of the cooling tower noise, which is largely indistinguishable and less obtrusive than noise associated with other operations at power plants. (Nuclear Regulatory Commission. 1996. *Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants*. NUREG-1437 Vol. 1.) Noise abatement features are an integral component of modern cooling tower designs and should be incorporated at the project level.

6. Noise. b. Will the proposal result in exposure of people to severe noise levels?

Answer: No

Foreseeable methods of compliance include structural and nonstructural BMPs, storm drain diversions and treatment strategies, relocating discharge outfalls, alternative cooling technologies, and pollution prevention. These methods may entail short-term disturbances during construction, operation, and maintenance of structural BMPs, storm water treatment facilities, relocating discharge outfalls, or alternative cooling technologies. The specific project impacts can be mitigated by standard noise abatement techniques including sound barriers and insulation to reduce noise from pumps, motors, fans, etc., passive design BMPs that do not require frequent maintenance, scheduling of maintenance during mid-day hours, and noise monitoring to ensure levels remain below acceptable levels. It is not foreseeable that this proposal will result in exposure of people to severe noise levels.

7. Light and Glare. Will the proposal produce new light or glare?

Answer: Maybe

Implementation of the proposed Basin Plan amendment is not likely to produce new light or glare because none of the foreseeable means of compliance involve additional lighting. Should nighttime construction activities be proposed, or should lighting be used to increase safety around structural BMPs or treatment facilities, potential impacts should be evaluated in the project level. Potential mitigation efforts may include screening and low-impact lighting.

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

8. Land Use. a. Will the proposal result in substantial alteration of the present or planned land use of an area?

Answer: Maybe

Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, the proposal may result in alteration of the present or planned land use of an area to provide land for storage, diversion or treatment facilities for urban and stormwater runoff. However, projects may be designed to increase parks and wildlife habitat areas and to improve water quality. Furthermore, certain structural BMPs can be suitable for an ultra-urban setting and can be specifically designed to accommodate limited land area, such as the subsurface Delaware sand filters discussed in the TMDL staff report. Potential conflicts between implementation efforts and other land uses can be resolved by standard planning efforts under which specific projects are reviewed by local planning agencies. Applicable and appropriate mitigation measures will be evaluated when specific projects are determined.

9. Natural Resources. a. Will the proposal result in increase in the rate of use of any natural resources?

Answer: ~~No~~Maybe

Implementation of the proposed Basin Plan amendment is not likely to significantly increase the rate of use of any natural resources. Some types of structural BMPs and treatment facilities may consume electricity to operate pumps, etc. (See "15. Energy. a.") However, if an integrated water resources approach is employed, the proposal is likely to decrease stress on water supplies by infiltrating to recharge aquifers. If chosen as a compliance option, conversion to cooling towers could result in decreased power plant efficiency, which would require power plants to increase natural gas consumption to increase onsite electricity generation. The amount of additional gas consumption would likely be insignificant in comparison to the existing gas consumption to operate the power plants.

9. Natural Resources. a. Will the proposal result in substantial depletion of any nonrenewable natural resource?

Answer: No

Implementation of the proposed Basin Plan amendment is not likely to result in substantial depletion of any nonrenewable natural resource. Rather it is likely to decrease stress on water supplies by infiltrating to recharge aquifers.

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

10. Risk of Upset. a. Will the proposal involve a risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to: oil, pesticides, chemicals or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions?

Answer: Maybe

Implementation of the proposed Basin Plan amendment is not likely to involve a risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to: oil, pesticides, chemicals or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions. Nor should it result in any increased exposure to hazards or hazardous material. While some use of hazardous materials (e.g., paint, oil, gasoline) is likely during construction, potential risks of exposure can be mitigated with proper handling and storage procedures. In addition, treatment plants may use disinfectants and caustics during operation and there is a potential risk that these materials might escape. Potential impacts should be considered and mitigated at the project level. Proper maintenance and oversight and the use of safer substitute materials in treatment plants could mitigate any risk of escape of hazardous materials.

11. Population. a. Will the proposal alter the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?

Answer: No

This proposal sets wasteload and load allocations to protect the beneficial uses of waters of the state. It is not foreseeable that implementation of the TMDL would alter the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area. Potential implementation strategies include a mixture of structural and nonstructural BMPs and would not directly or indirectly induce population growth in the area, displace existing housing, or displace people. If additional treatment plants or storage facilities were proposed, a project level ~~EIR~~ CEQA analysis would be required to address potential impacts to population. Increased infiltration would recharge groundwater and increase water supply, but this would not likely induce growth, rather it would decrease reliance on imported water. Finally, any potential impacts to population due to diversion of resources are not "environmental" impacts that involve changes in the physical environment. Integrated approaches used to implement this TMDL would, through reclamation and groundwater recharge, provide improved water quality and increase local water supplies for future generations.

12. Housing. a. Will the proposal affect existing housing, or create a demand for additional housing?

Answer: Maybe

Environmental impacts from structural controls to be placed in existing housing areas are similar to environmental impacts from structural controls placed in other areas with sensitive receptors. To the extent that BMPs, treatment facilities, or alternative cooling technologies must be located within

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

residential areas, mitigation measures may include screening to reduce aesthetic impacts, sound barriers and insulation to reduce noise from pumps, motors, fans, etc., passive design BMPs that do not require frequent maintenance, scheduling of maintenance during mid-day hours to reduce potential impacts from noise and increased traffic from service vehicles. Implementation of the proposed TMDL would not likely require displacement of existing housing. This is because structural BMPs can be suitable for an ultra-urban setting and can be specifically designed to accommodate limited land area, such as the subsurface Delaware sand filters. Furthermore, based on the estimated size constraints of various structural BMPs, the area required to site structural BMPs would be significantly less than the area of the watershed. It is not reasonably foreseeable that there would be a need to displace housing for this limited area.

13. Transportation/Circulation. a. Will the proposal result in generation of substantial additional vehicular movement?

Answer: Maybe

Potential impacts to vehicular movement may entail short-term disturbances during construction of surface and subsurface structural BMPs, treatment facilities, or ocean outfalls, if these methods of compliance were chosen. The specific project impacts can be mitigated by appropriate mitigation methods during construction. To the extent that site-specific projects entail excavation in roadways, such excavations shall be marked, barricaded, and traffic flow controlled with signals or traffic control personnel in compliance with authorized local police or California Highway Patrol requirements. These methods will be selected and implemented by responsible local agencies. The proposal is unlikely to result in the construction of any center (e.g., workplace, high-density residential, or shopping center) that would generate a substantial number of daily vehicle trips. Potential impacts caused by operation and maintenance could be avoided by designing passive BMPs that do not require frequent maintenance and scheduling of maintenance during non-peak traffic hours.

13. Transportation/Circulation. b. Effects on existing parking facilities, or demand for new parking?

Answer: Maybe

Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, the proposal may result in alterations to existing parking facilities to incorporate infiltration or other structural BMPs to treat storm water. Structural BMPs can be designed to accommodate space constraints and would not significantly decrease the amount of parking available in existing parking facilities.

13. Transportation/Circulation. c. Will the proposal result in substantial impact upon existing transportation systems?

Answer: Maybe

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, the proposal may result in temporary alterations to existing transportation systems during construction of structural BMPs, storm water diversions, treatment facilities, or ocean outfalls. The potential impacts are limited and short-term. Potential impacts could be reduced by limiting or restricting hours of construction so as to avoid peak traffic times and by providing temporary traffic signals and flagging to facilitate traffic movement. Structural BMPs installed on streets could potentially impact public rights of way. Potential impacts should be considered and mitigated at the project level. Potential mitigation measures include proper design and siting of structural BMPs and installation of signage to direct and control traffic.

13. Transportation/Circulation. d. Will the proposal result in alterations to present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods?

Answer: Maybe

Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, the proposal may result in temporary alterations to present traffic patterns during construction and operation and maintenance of structural BMPs, storm water diversion, treatment facilities, or ocean outfalls. Potential construction impacts are limited and short-term. Potential impacts could be reduced by limiting or restricting hours of construction so as to avoid peak traffic times and by providing temporary traffic signals and flagging to facilitate traffic movement. Potential impacts caused by operation and maintenance could be avoided by designing passive BMPs that do not require frequent maintenance and scheduling of maintenance during non-peak traffic hours. Potential impacts to traffic an street parking due to increased street sweeping could be mitigated by scheduling sweeping during mid-day hours or avoiding peak traffic hours.

13. Transportation/Circulation. e. Will the proposal result in alterations to waterborne, rail or air traffic?

Answer: Maybe

Depending on the implementation strategy and location chosen, the proposal may potentially result in temporary alterations to rail transportation during construction of storm water diversion or treatment facilities. However the potential impacts are limited and short-term and can be avoided or minimized through siting, designing, and scheduling of construction activities

13. Transportation/Circulation. f. Will the proposal result in increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists or pedestrians?

Answer: Maybe

Foreseeable methods of compliance include structural and nonstructural BMPs, storm drain diversion and treatment strategies, pollution prevention, alternative cooling technologies for power plants that discharge to the Estuary, and relocating discharge outfalls. These impacts may entail short-term

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

disturbances during construction of structural BMPs, pipelines for cooling towers, or treatment systems. The specific project impacts can be mitigated by appropriate mitigation methods during construction. To the extent that site-specific projects entail excavation in roadways, such excavations shall be marked, barricaded, and traffic flow controlled with signals or traffic control personnel in compliance with authorized local police or California Highway Patrol requirements. These methods will be selected and implemented by responsible local agencies. Structural BMPs installed on streets could impact public rights of way and potentially increase traffic collisions. Potential impacts should be considered and mitigated at the project level, including proper design and siting of structural BMPs and installation of signage to direct and control traffic.

14. Public Service. a. Will the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: Fire protection?

Answer: No

Proposed implementation strategies for this TMDL include structural and nonstructural BMPs, storm drain diversions and treatment strategies, pollution prevention, and relocating discharge outfalls. Any construction activities would be subject to applicable building and safety and fire prevention regulations and codes. It is not foreseeable that this proposal will have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered fire protection services. Any potential impacts to response times due to traffic impacts (see responses to 13) could be avoided with signals or traffic control personnel. Any potential impact to fire protection due to diversion of resources is not an "environmental" impact that involves changes in the physical environment.

14. Public Service. b. Will the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: Police protection?

Answer: No

Proposed implementation strategies for this TMDL include structural and nonstructural BMPs, storm drain diversions and treatment strategies, pollution prevention, and relocating discharge outfalls. It is not foreseeable that this proposal will have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered any police protection services except for possible increased traffic control during construction projects or protection of facilities. Any potential impact to police protection due to diversion of resources is not an "environmental" impact that involves changes in the physical environment.

14. Public Service. c. Will the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: Schools?

Answer: Maybe

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

Proposed implementation strategies for this TMDL include stormwater best management practices, storm drain diversions and treatment strategies, pollution prevention, and relocating discharge outfalls. Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, school facilities may offer opportunities for storm water collection and reuse through structural BMPs. Maintenance of such facilities is not expected to significantly increase school facilities maintenance demands. Projects may be designed to increase recreational areas and to improve water quality. Certain structural BMPs can be suitable for an ultra-urban setting and can be specifically designed to accommodate limited land area, such as the subsurface Delaware sand filters discussed in the TMDL staff report. Potential conflicts between implementation efforts and other land uses, including schools, can be resolved by standard planning efforts under which specific projects are reviewed by local planning agencies. Applicable and appropriate mitigation measures will be evaluated when specific projects are determined. Any potential impact to schools due to diversion of resources is not an "environmental" impact that involves changes in the physical environment.

14. Public Service. d. Will the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: Parks or other recreational facilities?

Answer: Maybe

Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, the proposal may result in the need for new or altered parks or other recreational facilities to provide land for storage, diversion or treatment facilities for urban and storm water runoff. Projects may be designed to increase parks and wildlife habitat areas and to improve water quality. Furthermore, certain structural BMPs can be suitable for an ultra-urban setting and can be specifically designed to accommodate limited land area, such as the subsurface Delaware sand filters discussed in the TMDL staff report. Potential conflicts between implementation efforts and other land uses, including parks and recreational facilities, can be resolved by standard planning efforts under which specific projects are reviewed by local planning agencies. Applicable and appropriate mitigation measures will be evaluated when specific projects are determined.

14. Public Service. e. Will the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: maintenance of public facilities, including roads?

Answer: Yes

The proposal will result in the need for increased maintenance of public facilities and, specifically, storm water treatment and/or diversion facilities or structural BMPs. Non-structural BMPs, such as increased storm drain catch basin cleanings and improved street cleaning, would require additional road maintenance as well. While these requirements may result in increases in maintenance costs, any increase will be outweighed by the resulting overall improvement in water quality and protection of aquatic life and water supply beneficial uses. Nevertheless, an increased cost of maintenance is not an "environmental" impact that involves a change in the physical environment. Increased street sweeping and storm drain catch basin cleanings would result in positive environmental impacts through cleaner streets. Potentially significant negative impacts from increased street sweeping resulting in increased air emissions, are addressed in 2.a.

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

14. Public Service. f. Will the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: other government services?

Answer: Yes.

The proposal will result in the need for increased monitoring to track compliance with the TMDL. Non-structural BMPs, such as education and outreach, would result in the need for new or altered governmental services. In addition, as described in 14.e., additional maintenance would be required for street sweeping and structural BMP maintenance. Potentially significant negative impacts from increased street sweeping resulting in increased air emissions, are addressed in 2.a. Nevertheless, increased costs due to these types of alterations to governmental services are not "environmental" impacts that involve a change in the physical environment. Increased public education and outreach regarding recycling, proper disposal of wastes, and other source control measures resulting in improved water quality are positive environmental impacts.

15. Energy. a. Will the proposal result in use of substantial amounts of fuel or energy?

Answer: ~~No~~Maybe

The proposed Basin Plan Amendment should not result in the use of substantial amounts of fuel or energy, or a substantial increase in demand upon existing sources of energy, or require the development of new sources of energy, because the foreseeable means of compliance would include a mix of non-structural and structural BMPs, which would not require such demands. Pumps that require electricity may be incorporated into structural BMPs and diversions; however, operation of pumps is not expected to place substantial increases on existing energy supply. Responsible agencies may avoid the use of pumps in structural BMPs by siting and designing BMPs to allow for sufficient hydraulic head in order to operate BMPs by gravity flow. Urban runoff plants are another alternative implementation strategy, which would require additional electricity, but less energy intensive treatment could be employed. In any event, such plants are not a requirement to meet the TMDL. If chosen as a compliance option, conversion to cooling towers could result in decreased efficiency, which would require power plants to increase natural gas consumption to increase onsite electricity generation. The amount of additional electricity generation and gas consumption to operate the cooling towers would likely be insignificant in comparison to the existing gas consumption to operate the power plants.

15. Energy. b. Will the proposal result in a substantial increase in demand upon existing sources of energy, or require the development of new sources of energy.

Answer: No

See response to "15. Energy. a." The proposed Basin Plan Amendment should not result in the use of substantial amounts of fuel or energy, or a substantial increase in demand upon existing sources of

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

energy, or require the development of new sources of energy, because the foreseeable means of compliance rely primarily on structural and nonstructural BMPs rather than treatment systems that would require substantial increase in demand upon existing sources of energy, or require the development of new sources of energy. The amount of additional electricity generation and gas consumption to operate the cooling towers, if chosen as a compliance strategy, would likely be insignificant in comparison to the existing gas consumption to operate the power plants.

16. Utilities and Service Systems. a. Will the proposal result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to the following utilities: power or natural gas?

Answer: No

Implementation of this Basin Plan amendment involves the diversion and/or treatment of urban and storm water runoff, the use of storm water BMPs, pollution control measures, ~~and~~ relocating discharge outfalls, or alternative cooling technologies for power plants. Some projects may require moderate amounts of electricity to operate pumps and treatment units. However, it is not foreseeable that this proposal will result in a substantial increase need for new systems, or substantial alterations to power or natural gas utilities. The amount of additional electricity generation and gas consumption to operate the cooling towers, if chosen as a compliance strategy, would likely be insignificant in comparison to the existing gas consumption to operate the power plants.

16. Utilities and Service Systems. b. Will the proposal result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to the following utilities: communications systems?

Answer: No

Implementation of this Basin Plan amendment involves the diversion and/or treatment of urban and storm water runoff, the use of storm water BMPs, pollution control measures, and relocating discharge outfalls. It is not foreseeable that this proposal will result in a substantial increase need for new systems, or substantial alterations to communication systems.

16. Utilities and Service Systems. c. Will the proposal result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to the following utilities: water?

Answer: Maybe

Implementation of this Basin Plan amendment involves the diversion and/or treatment of urban and storm water runoff, the use of storm water BMPs, pollution control measures, alternative cooling technologies, and relocating discharge outfalls. It is not foreseeable that this proposal will result in a substantial increase need for new systems, or substantial alterations to water utilities. The integrated water resources approach has the potential to recharge groundwater aquifers, and it is possible that additional wells or piping may be necessary to access this enhanced water supply. However, in this event, the

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

increased water supply would outweigh the impacts of having to construct additional infrastructure. Environmental impacts due to construction of new water utilities would be speculative at this point, and would need to be assessed by the responsible agency in a project-level CEQA analysis. If alternative cooling technologies, including wet-cooling towers, were chosen as a compliance strategy, there could be an increased demand for public water supply. However, steam electric generating facilities using once-through salt water can reduce water usage by 70 to 96% by converting to closed-cycle, recirculating cooling systems. It is not reasonably foreseeable that the increased water demand would result in the need for new water systems, or substantial alterations to existing water utilities. If the power plants were unable to fully supply wet cooling towers with existing reclaimed water supplies, they could look to alternative sources, such as the reuse of captured storm water. Power plants may work with other responsible agencies under the TMDL to pursue an integrated water resources approach. To the extent that potable water would be used in wet cooling towers, the amount of required water could be mitigated through the installation of flow reduction technologies such as recirculating cooling lakes, cooling canals, or hybrid wet-dry cooling towers.

16. Utilities and Service Systems. d. Will the proposal result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to the following utilities: Sewer or septic tanks?

Answer: No

Implementation of this Basin Plan amendment involves the diversion and/or treatment of urban and storm water runoff, the use of storm water BMPs, pollution control measures, and relocating discharge outfalls to control loading of metals to the San Gabriel River and its tributaries. Additional treatment requirements for POTWs are not anticipated for implementation of the TMDL. It is not foreseeable that this proposal will result in a substantial increase need for new systems, or substantial alterations to sewers or septic tanks. If diversion of runoff to a treatment plant is chosen as an implementation strategy, it is not likely that such a treatment plant would alter or expand its design capacity to accommodate additional the flow.

16. Utilities and Service Systems. e. Will the proposal result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to the following utilities: storm water drainage?

Answer: Yes

In order to achieve compliance with the TMDL, storm water drainage systems may need to be retrofitted with structural BMPs or re-configured to divert and/or capture and treat a portion of storm water. These alterations will have a positive environmental impact with the resulting reduced pollutant loads from urban and storm water runoff. Construction of these retrofits, however could have short-term noise and traffic impacts which could by mitigated as discussed in the responses to 6 and 13. Implementation of the TMDL could potentially place a burden on existing storm drain systems or could potentially lead to the development of a storm water utility. Nevertheless, these types of alterations to utilities and service systems are not "environmental" impacts that involve a change in the physical environment.

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

16. Utilities and Service Systems. f. Will the proposal result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to the following utilities: solid waste and disposal?

Answer: Maybe

Implementation of this Basin Plan amendment involves the diversion and/or treatment of urban and storm water runoff, the use of storm water BMPs, pollution control measures, and relocating discharge outfalls. To the extent that BMPs collect sediment which contain metals concentrations in excess of regulatory concentrations, these sediments may be subject to solid or hazardous waste disposal requirements. It is not foreseeable that this proposal will result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to solid waste and disposal utilities.

17. Human Health. a. Will the proposal result in creation of any health hazard or potential health hazard (excluding mental health)?

Answer: Maybe

Implementation of storm water detention and treatment BMPs could create a potential health hazard if facilities are not properly maintained to include vector (mosquito) control. This potential adverse impact can be mitigated by designing systems that minimize stagnant water conditions and/or by requiring oversight and treatment of those systems by vector control agencies. BMPs that collect sediment could potentially contain elevated metals concentrations. Potential health hazards associated with removing collected material and maintaining BMPs can be mitigated with proper handling and storage procedures and standard industrial hygiene practices such as protective skin barriers and respirators. Unguarded retention basins and other structural BMPs could expose people to potential falling hazards. Such hazards could be avoided by installing fencing and barricades around structural BMPs.

17. Human Health. b. Will the proposal result in exposure of people to potential health hazards?

Answer: No

Human health impacts from maintaining storm water BMPs and treatment operations can be mitigated with proper handling and storage procedures and standard industrial hygiene practices. Potential falling hazards could be avoided through fencing and barricades. Applicable and appropriate mitigation measures will be evaluated when specific projects are determined. It is not foreseeable that this proposal will result in exposure of people to potential health hazards (other than those identified in 17.a.)

18. Aesthetics. a. Will the proposal result in the obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public?

Answer: ~~No~~Maybe

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

This Basin Plan amendment is not likely to result in the obstruction of scenic vistas or views open to the public since storm drain diversions and relocating discharge outfalls will involve sub-surface structures and most BMPs will be sited at ground level. Should treatment facilities or alternative cooling technologies be considered, standard architectural and landscape architectural practices can be implemented to reduce impacts from aesthetically offensive structural impacts. In addition, projects may be located so as to avoid potential impacts to scenic vistas. Responsible agencies will evaluate applicable and appropriate mitigation measures when specific projects are determined.

18. Aesthetics. b. Will the proposal result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?

Answer: ~~No~~Maybe

Depending on the implementation strategy chosen, the proposal may result in the installation of storage, diversion or treatment facilities and structural BMPs for storm water that could be aesthetically offensive if not properly designed, sited, and maintained. However, many structural BMPs can be designed to provide habitat, recreational areas, and green spaces in addition to improving storm water quality. Standard architectural and landscape architectural practices can be implemented to reduce impacts from aesthetically offensive structural impacts. Screening and landscaping may be used to mitigate aesthetic effects. Applicable and appropriate mitigation measures will be evaluated when specific projects are determined.

19. Recreation. a. Will the proposal result in impact on the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities?

Answer: Yes.

Implementation of the TMDL will have a positive impact on the quality and quantity of recreational opportunities by protecting aquatic life-related beneficial uses. Many parks are integrating storm water BMPs as part of the aesthetic and architectural features of the sites. The environmental impacts can be mitigated through construction BMPs and siting, planning and design practices that minimize environmental impacts. Applicable and appropriate mitigation measures will be evaluated when specific projects are determined. Adding water features to parks has the potential to increase recreational opportunities by providing fishing, birding, and aesthetic enjoyment. Also see 14.d.

20. Archeological/Historical. a. Will the proposal result in the alteration of a significant archeological or historical site structure, object or building?

Answer: Maybe

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

Implementation of the proposed Basin Plan amendment is unlikely to impact a significant archeological or historical site structure, object or building because structural BMPs or treatment facilities would likely be sited in already urbanized areas. Any potential impact to archeological and/or historical resources by the construction of new treatment facilities can only be determined by a project-level ~~EIR~~ CEQA analysis once the location of any such facility has been determined. The agencies responsible for implementing this TMDL should consult the relevant local archeological or historical commissions or authorities to determine ways to avoid significant adverse impacts to any such structures, if implementation is proposed that would affect them.

21. Mandatory Findings of Significance.

The implementation of this Basin Plan amendment will result in improved water quality in the waters of the Region and will have significant positive impacts to the environment over the long term. Specific projects employed to implement the Basin Plan amendment may have adverse significant impacts to the environment, but these impacts are expected to be limited, short-term or may be mitigated through design and scheduling. The initial study for the Basin Plan amendment and this checklist provide the necessary information pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21159 to conclude that properly designed and implemented BMPs or treatment systems will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment. Any of the potential impacts could be mitigated at the subsequent project level phase because it would develop the design of a specific BMP or treatment system.

Specific projects, which may have a significant impact, would be subject to a separate environmental review. The lead agency for subsequent projects would be obligated to design and implement projects as to mitigate any impacts they identify, for example by mitigating potential flooding impacts by designing the BMPs with adequate margins of safety (Pub. Res. Code, §15091(a)(2)).

V. DETERMINATION

The implementation of this TMDL will result in improved water quality the San Gabriel River and its tributaries, but it may result in temporary or permanent localized significant adverse impacts to the environment. Specific projects employed to implement the TMDL may have significant impacts, but these impacts are expected to be limited, short-term or may be mitigated through careful design and scheduling. The staff report for the TMDL and this checklist provide the necessary information pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21159 to conclude that properly designed and implemented BMPs or treatment systems would not have a significant adverse effect on the environment, and all agencies responsible for implementing the TMDL should ensure that their projects are properly designed and implemented. Any of the potential impacts would need to be mitigated at a subsequent, project level because they would involve the design of a specific BMP or treatment system, which the Water Board is prohibited by law from specifying. (Wat. C. § 13360.) At this stage, any more particularized conclusions would be speculative.

Specific projects, which may have a significant impact, would be subject to a separate environmental review. The lead agency for subsequent projects would be obligated to mitigate any impacts they identify, for example by mitigating potential flooding impacts by designing the BMPs with adequate margins of safety (Pub. Res. Code, §15091(a)(2)). To the extent the alternatives, mitigation measures, or both, are not deemed feasible by those agencies, the necessity of implementing the federally required TMDL to protect aquatic life and water supply beneficial uses in the San Gabriel River and its tributaries (an action required by law to achieve the express, national policy of the Clean Water Act) outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects (Pub. Res. Code, §15093). Implementation of the TMDL will have substantial benefits to water quality and will enhance beneficial uses. Habitat carries a significant non-market economic value. Enhancement of habitat beneficial uses (including the warm freshwater habitat, cold freshwater habitat, wildlife habitat, wetland habitat and rare, threatened or endangered species) will also have positive indirect economic and social benefits. These substantial benefits outweigh any unavoidable adverse environmental effects. Additionally, restoring attainment of water quality standards in the San Gabriel River will protect water supply beneficial uses, which is of region wide economic significance. Integrated approaches used to implement this TMDL, through reclamation and groundwater recharge, will provide improved water quality and increase local water supplies for future generations.

In accordance with Pub. Res. Code, §15091, the Regional Board finds that although the proposed project could have significant effect on the environment, revisions in the project, to avoid or substantially lessen the impacts, can and should be made by or agreed to by the project proponents. This finding is supported by the evidence provided in the impact evaluation section of this document, which indicates that all foreseeable impacts are either short-term or can be readily mitigated.

IV. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION (continued)

On the basis of this initial evaluation and staff report for the TMDL, which collectively provide the required information:

☐ I find the proposed Basin Plan amendment could not have a significant effect on the environment.

☒ I find that the proposed Basin Plan amendment could have a significant adverse effect on the environment. However, there are feasible alternatives and/or feasible mitigation measures that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact. These alternatives are discussed above and in the staff report for the TMDL.

☐ I find the proposed Basin Plan amendment may have a significant effect on the environment. There are no feasible alternatives and/or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts. See the attached written report for a discussion of this determination.

DATE: _____

_____
Jonathan S. Bishop
Executive Officer